

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /056 W
-----011213 090207 /15

P R 011120Z MAR 77
FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 136
INFO AMEMBASSY COLOMBO
AMEMBASSY DACCA
AMEMBASSY KABUL
AMCONSUL KARACHI
AMCONSUL LAHORE
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

C O N F I D E N T I A L ISLAMABAD 2072

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PK, PINT
SUBJECT: A QUIET DAY IN THE CAMPAIGN

REF: ISLAMABAD 2041

1. VERNACULAR PRESS HAS GIVEN CONSIDERABLE COVERAGE TO FEBRUARY 28 PNA SPONSORED NATION-WIDE HARTAL AND REPORTS INDICATE ITS SUCCESS WAS SPOTTY. REFTEL NOTED MIXED REACTION HARTAL CALL RECEIVED IN KARACHI, LAHORE AND LYALLPUR. PRESS COVERAGE INDICATES ALL SHOPS AND BAZAARS CLOSED IN SUKKUR, SIND THROUGHOUT THE DAY, AND HARTAL HAD MIXED SUCCESS IN MULTAN AND HYDERABAD. RESPONSE TO WORK STOPPAGE CALL WAS MINIMAL IN BALUCHISTAN AND UNENTHUSIASTIC IN THE FRONTIER.

2. CONGENS KARACHI AND LAHORE AND CONSULATE PESHAWAR REPORT THAT ALL THREE CITIES ARE QUIET TODAY, AS ARE PINDI AND ISLAMABAD, AND BUSINESS GOES ON AS USUAL. NEXT POSSIBILITY OF MAJOR CONFRONTATION WILL BE TOMORROW MARCH SECOND WHEN PM ARRIVES IN KARACHI. HE WILL BE LEADING WHAT PPP AND GOVERNMENT-CONTROLLED
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PRESS HAVE BEEN BILLING AS "MAMMOTH" AND "LARGEST-EVER" RALLY AND PROCESSION WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON. CONGEN KARACHI REPORTS BHUTTO SCHEDULED RALLY IN RESPONSE TO WORRIED PPP CITY AND PROVINCIAL WORKERS WHO WANTED COUNTERWEIGHT TO ASGHAR KHAN'S HUGE FEBRUARY 20 PROCESSION. PPP WORDERS IN CITY NOW FEAR THEY WILL NOT BE ABLE TO ARRANGE FOR LARGE CROWD NECESSARY TO PROVE PPP MUSCLE AND CONSIDERABLE PRESSURE BEING APPLIED TO TRANSPORTATION

OWNERS TO SUPPLY BUSES AND TRUCKS TO BRING PEOPLE TO RALLY. PNA IS ENCOURAGING TRANSPORTERS NOT TO COOPERATE, AND POTENTIAL FOR CONFRONTATION BETWEEN WORKERS ON BOTH SIDES WILL BE HIGH.

3. PNA LEADER ASGHAR KHAN ALSO REPORTEDLY ARRIVING IN KARACHI MARCH SECOND. ON THE THIRD HE WILL LEAD AN EID-UL-MILAD-UN-NABI (PROPHET'S BIRTHDAY) PROCESSION IN THE CITY. FEDERAL RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS MINISTER KAUSER NIAZI WILL LEAD SIMILAR MARCH IN RAWALPINDI, AND MANY OBSERVERS ARE FEARFUL THAT ESSENTIALLY RELIGIOUS PROCESSIONS COULD EASILY TURN INTO CONFRONTATIONS BETWEEN PPP AND PNA SUPPORTERS.

4. PM HAS ANNOUNCED HE WILL HOLD ONE MORE "MAJOR" CAMPAIGN RALLY ON MARCH FOURTH IN LAHORE.
BYROADE

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Message Attributes

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Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 01-Mar-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
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Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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